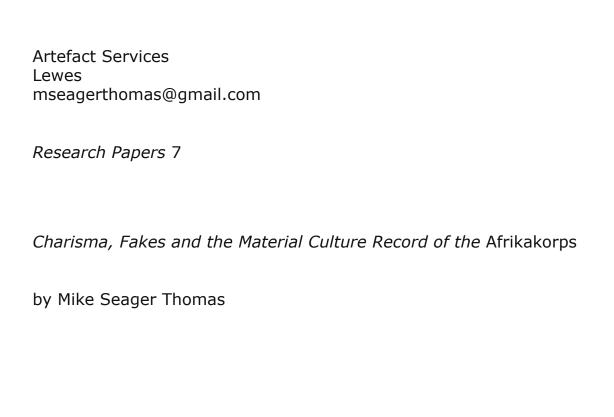
Charisma, Fakes and the **Material Culture Record of the Afrikakorps**

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Charisma, Fakes and the Material Culture Record of the *Afrikakorps*

by Mike Seager Thomas

The material culture of the WW2 German Afrikakorps¹ (Fig. 1) is of great popular interest, but because of the low academic status of 20th-century military antiquities, and a concomitant lack of academic interest in these, it has received little scholarly attention. Till now the little work done on it has been by lay enthusiasts, the focus of this typo-historical (Bender & Law 1973; Borg & Twiname 2010; Davis 1973, 160-70; Küchler 1973; Kurtz 2004; McGuirk 1987; Thomas 1998; Scipion & Bastian 1996; Pritchett 2014, chapter 4; Williamson 1991 etc.), with just the occasional nod to what it can tell us about, and its meaning in the past (McGuirk 1987, 133, 138-40; 2014; Seager Thomas 2017, 36-37, 45, tab. 3). But as with other categories of material culture, there is more to it than this. Amongst the more important omissions is what it means to us, the curators of the extant record today. A key aspect of this and the centre point of this essay is "charisma", a property analogous to that possessed by charismatic individuals and imputed by us to institutions and cultural and (particularly) religious objects (Shils 1965; Taves 2016). It is my contention here that we cannot fully understand the material culture of the Afrikakorps without understanding this charisma, and the way it affects how we, as enthusiasts who "get it", as disinterested bystanders, and as idealists and cynics, who see in it something to oppose or use, interact with and affect the record.

THE CHARISMA OF MILITARY ANTIQITIES

War and Romance

Few who have had the misfortune to experience war would describe it as romantic but there are a few episodes in history when it, or a party to it, has come to seem so: Napoleon and the French Empire, the Confederate States of America, T.E. Lawrence's revolt in the desert, the Spanish International Brigades, the Flying Tigers, and, in deeper time, the Crusades and the conquests of Alexander the Great. Possible recent candidates include the fights for and against *Daesh* or Islamic State. Why do these stand out from the everyday horror of war? Not one after all is without its darker, in some cases, much darker side. Recurrent themes include a charismatic leader, a cause, an exotic setting, daring-do, triumph in adversity and, in the end, an heroic failure. Napoleon, Lawrence and Alexander were charismatic. Napoleon carried with him the idea of the French Nation, and the ideals, first of the Republic and



Figure 1.

A classic Afrikakorps collection. A first pattern Tropenhelm, a period postcard of Field Marshal Rommel, a sand-camouflaged M35 helmet, a sand-camouflaged gasmask case and a 1943 diary, issued to German troops in North Africa. The only wrong note is struck by the cap, which though crusty, is of a date (1943) and make (Mayser), not currently known to have seen service in Africa. Photo: Edward Cotterell

then the French Empire; the Confederate States of America championed the idea of States Rights, in the face of apparent usurpations by the US federal government; the International Brigades fought fascism, Napoleon, Lawrence, the Flying Tigers, the Crusaders and Alexander, all fought in exotic locales. Most are known for their daring-do and though for a while they triumphed, in the end all proved a waste of life and matériel.

The WW2 German Afrikakorps is another. Because of the charisma of its commanding officer, Erwin Rommel, its dash, its honourable conduct (one Afrikakorps veteran attributed his survival on capture in France by troops of Leclerc's 2nd Armoured Division to his "Afrika" cuff title, which set him apart from many other German soldiers: Höller & Reisner 2012) and the perceived nature of the theatre in which it was engaged, it has captured the imagination of many, from Winston Churchill, who acknowledged Rommel's success in Parliament and in his The Grand Alliance (1950, 176-7), and writers like Basil Liddell-Hart, who compared Rommel to Lawrence (1953, xiv) and Jean Lartéguy who in The Praetorians likened his French paratroopers

¹ While technically the Afrikakorps comprised only some of the German units that served in North Africa, the name is and—up to a point—was, synonymous with the German expedition as a whole, a fact demonstrated by the issue of the Afrikakorps cuff title (Fig. 2) to all German Army units serving there, and its unofficial adoption by Luftwaffe personnel (McGuirk 1987, 154, 174). I use the name in this wider sense.

favourably to the men of the *Afrikakorps* (1963, 19), to filmmaker J. Lee Thompson, who directed the 1958 film of Christopher Landon's *Ice Cold in Alex* (1957), which sums up the now popular view of the WW2 North African campaign and the *Afrikakorps* in the classic line: "All against the desert, the greater enemy".² The consequence of this has been the setting aside of any opprobrium accruing to it—and its material culture—as part of Adolf Hitler's aggressive war machine, the rehabilitation in the public imagination of a group of men among whom inevitably were supporters of Hitler (Fay 1945, 193; Irving 1979) and, as with the relics of Napoleon, the Confederacy and Lawrence's revolt before it, the acquisition by or attribution to its material culture of charisma (Major 2008; Seager Thomas 2017, 14–15).

Charisma and the material culture of the Afrikakorps

Charisma, insofar as it pertains to objects, partakes of two things, the intrinsic properties of the object, such as size and fineness, and its social meaning, in part our response to these intrinsic properties and, and in part attributed to the object—in our imaginations—by its cultural, historical and environmental associations. Individual charismatic objects can possess one or other of these properties, or both. Most, however, partake of both, or of the latter only. A lay observer unaware of the context of an Easter Island *moai*, for example, would very likely be awed by and revere it for its size and appearance alone, but for most of us, its charisma would be added to by the knowledge that it was the product of an isolated Stone Age culture and the debate that surrounds the disappearance of this, and, were we to encounter it on the island, by its abandonment like the head of Ozymandius in Shelly's famous poem, face down, broken at the neck and in the middle of nowhere.

In several recent scholarly discussions of Charismatic Objects (e.g. Parker 2018; Wingfield 2010), the combination of intrinsic and imparted properties, and implicitly their charisma, is acknowledged.

But objects do not need to be beautiful or physically impressive to have charisma. Potentially, an association with a place, an event or a person of perceived importance, can render them charismatic. Though not usually in these terms, the possession by objects of such imparted properties is also acknowledged, particularly by those interested in the material culture of religion (e.g. Taves 2016; Paine 2013, 118), from which the idea derives, but also the collecting and museum community, which daily values objects, not for their intrinsic properties, which in many cases are of little note, but because their associations have rendered them charismatic—historic Test match cricket balls (Synge 2005), Napoleon's bicorn hat and other Napoleon memorabilia (Reevell 2014), the Duchamp's urinal (The Economist 2010), and so on. This relationship is very like that of a relic to a Saint: the closer the association, the more potent—the more charismatic—the object.

The material culture of the *Afrikakorps* is mostly of this second type. It includes a few surviving armoured vehicles, the size of which certainly inspires awe, even though all have now been detached from their original, Ozymandian contexts, but for the most part it consists of humbler material, tropical uniforms and personal equipment, the charisma of which derives wholly from

² A paraphrase of Landon's original text, which reads, "All against one—against the greater enemy."

its association with the North African military campaign; and once again, the closer the association, the more charismatic the object. For a piece of WWII German Army tropical kit to partake of the charisma derived from association with the *Afrikakorps*, it must fall within a restricted date range and conform typologically to what we know to have been issued for use in the desert (e.g. McGuirk 1987, 132–87). (Because of the loosening of the link with the desert campaign, late material, which may have seen service elsewhere, will be less



Figure 2.

An Afrikakorps cuff title still attached to the cut-off sleeve of an early WW2 German Army tropical tunic. Though it has no history, except that it was first came to light in Scotland, its configuration strongly suggests that it is an original Afrikakorps piece, probably the souvenir of an allied (Scottish?) serviceman. Photo: author



Figure 3. Hinge from the engine hatch of a German PzKw III tank knockedout in La Mornaghia military cemetery, outside Tunis. I found the hinge and two others in the exhumed cemetery in the early 1970s. Its service in the North African theatre, therefore, is undeniable. Photo: author

charismatic than early material). Better still, it will be "crusty". In many cases this will diminish it as an object per se, but it enhances its charisma, because it shows that it was actually used, and reinforces the essential connection between it and the all-important campaign (e.g. Kurtz 2004, 112). Finally, and best of all, it will have a plausible veteran provenance: "Capturée par un soldat australien à Tobrouk, cette casquette a de grands chances d'avoir appartenu à un homme du Schützen-Regiment 115" (Borg & Twiname 2010, 21), or some such thing. The cut-off shown (Fig. 2) is without a veteran provenance but the cuff title, the sleeve to which it is attached and the way it is attached are authentically Afrikakorps, its "crustiness" convincing, and the configuration of the artefact as a whole— if faked—more costly than the parts from which it would have had to be fashioned. Almost certainly therefore it is authentic Afrikakorps. The tank hinge (Fig. 3) is also authentic. It has a known wartime (Austin 1943, pl. 11) (Fig. 4) and recent history (I picked it up myself at the former German war cemetery of La Mornaghia, Tunisia (Thurston 1973, 186), after the graves had been cleared and the rest of the tank taken away).3 Neither is awe-inspiring but for those who "get it" it, both have charisma.

Figure 4. Newsreel photo of the tank from which the hinge shown in Figure 3 comes, shown shortly after its destruction on the 6th or 7th of May 1943. The tankwithout three of its original hinges!-is now in the Munster Tank Museum, Germany. Photo: Austin 1943, pl. 11



THE IMPLICATIONS OF CHARISMA FOR THE MATERIAL **CULTURE RECORD**

The importance of this charisma is of course a matter for debate. Not everybody finds bits of grubby cloth and rusty metal charismatic, indeed to many they are repugnant, especially if like these they are associated with war; while others, as we have seen, attribute the same property to guite different but likewise intrinsically meaningless things. But it does exist, at least in the imagination, and this has an effect on the way we interact with those things that we endow with it—including the material culture of the Afrikakorps.



Figure 5 The binoculars used by German troops in the desert were occasionally camouflaged, but not usually (McGuirk 1987, 250, 173). Photo: Mike Donne

To begin with, interest in the charismatic is greater than it is in the everyday. A guick survey of the books on the WW2 North African campaign with the name "Afrikakorps" or "Afrika Korps" in their titles on Amazon uk and Bookfinder.com threw up over a hundred, including eight on uniforms (Appx 1). These include original texts in English, French, Italian, German and Spanish. War and military antiquities are ever popular topics of course, but if we compare these numbers to those of books on the campaign with titles including the names of the Afrikakorps' less charismatic British and Commonwealth foes, the "Eighth Army", "8th Army" and "Desert Rats" in their titles, there is only just over half this number including only one on uniforms (Appx 2). Most of these are in English. The difference in the numbers of books with Rommel and his self-publicising but uncharismatic opposite number, Montgomery, in the title is even greater. There is also a demand for, and concomitant hike in the monetary value of the objects themselves, which the market does its best to satisfy and exploit. The result of this is four-fold. Firstly, a massive fraud is perpetrated

³ At the time of its destruction, the tank was part of Kampfgruppe Irkens (Bender & Law 1973, 109). It may very well have been the last Afrikakorps tank knocked-out.

on the interested but ill-informed public—the naïve, young, the ignorant, the stupid and the enthusiastic—on whom vast numbers of "fakes," in the broadest sense of the word, are passed off (Seager Thomas 2015); secondly, the integrity of the record is damaged (Seager Thomas 2018 in prep.), and its interpretative value diminished; thirdly, the uncertainty introduced into the authentic material record by some of these fakes results in the destruction of the authentic material record's charisma; and finally, a completely new range of artefacts is created, which trade on the charisma of the past.

AFRIKAKORPS FAKES

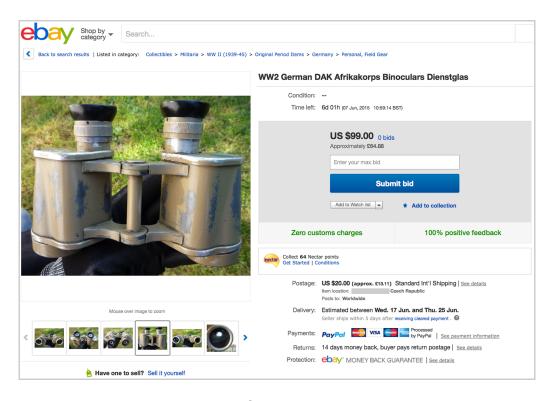


Figure 6

Later issues binoculars were painted dark yellow in the factory (Rottman & Volstad 1991, 4) but it is unlikely that any of these reached Africa. Those shown here are authentic but the description of them as "DAK Afrikakorps" is false. Photo: ebay

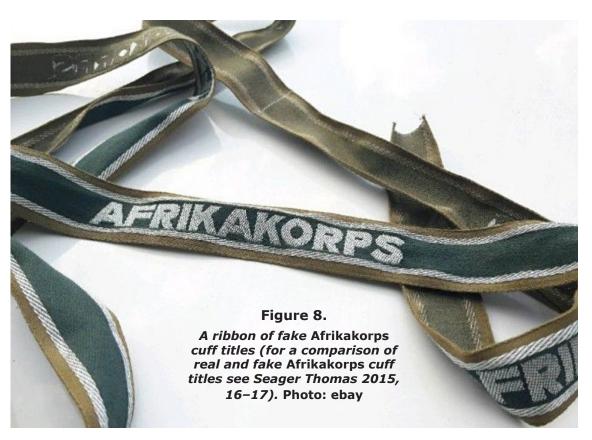
Innocuous and destructive fakes

The remainder of this essay details three groups of everyday but destructive Afrikakorps "fakes" for which, in different ways, charisma as characterised above is central to a full understanding of them. All three provide insights into the nature of this charisma, and/ or have significant implications for the integrity of the Afrikakorps material culture record. But these are not the only Afrikakorps fakes out there. Most commonplace of all are unmodified, German WW2 material culture with no relationship to the North African campaign, which is passed-off again and again as Afrikakorps, and good and bad Afrikakorps uniform and equipment reproductions, many of which are deliberately distressed to give them a period "feel", and in many cases belong to clearly distinguishable groups of fakes, which likewise are passed off again and again as *Afrikakorps* (Seager Thomas 2015; 2017; 2018 in prep.) **Figures 5–8** show three typical examples. The abundance of these illustrates



Figure 7.

Two fake Afrikamützen (Africa caps). Both sport authentic eagles and cockades and have been distressed to make them look authentic. Obvious giveaways in these pictures are the maker's name, Gg Schwert, not in fact a manufacturer of Afrikamützen, the eyelet rivets, which are steel rather than zinc (rare in this model of cap) and the absence of stitching on the underside of the peak. Photos: author (right); Militaria Market (bottom left); Wallis & Wallis, Lewes (top left)



the wider context of faking to which the other fakes described here belong. Like these others, they exploit the charisma attributed to the real thing. A few have sneaked into the literature (e.g. Kurtz 2004, 339 middle; McGuirk 1987, pl. 23 left; Scipion 1996, 12 bottom, 16.p, 35 bottom etc.) and into museum collections (WAF 2007), but overall their impact on the authentic *Afrikakorps* material culture record is minimal, as with just a little knowledge—readily available online—most of us can identify the groups to which they belong, *ad hoc* or related to a particular faking operation, and distinguish them from the real thing (Seager Thomas 2018 in prep.), and it is not my intention to discuss them in detail here. Their interest is as examples of contemporary material culture, which tell us about the military antiquities market and the gullibility of collectors, not the material culture of the *Afrikakorps*.



Figure 9.

An officers' Afrikamütze first restored or upgraded (it is impossible to tell which) by the replacement of its issue insignia with fancy "officers'" insignia (left), and later restored to its "original" condition (right). The replacement eagle is probably too late for the cap, which is of an early date, while the stitching imitates techniques associated with two different periods for the cap maker: early (the eagle), and early to late (the cockade). Photos: WAF (left); VirtualGrenadier (right)

Undocumented restoration and modification

The first of the groups of fakes I wish to consider in detail consists of undocumented restorations and modifications of otherwise original material. These are carried out because the restorer or modifier wants something as close as possible to what was used or worn in the desert (a Charismatic Object), because they wish to complete a set, or, if the restoration or modification carried out is unidentifiable, because it is profitable, objects used in the desert and associated with particular formations (such as Panzer Divisions) being scarce and therefore valuable. For the most part it involves the restoration of insignia, which was removed by order, in captivity, or after the war and the addition of insignia that was not originally present (**Figs 9 & 10**). The consequences of restoration and modification for the object and the wider record are threefold. Firstly, one phase of its history is given a false pre-eminence over another. Indeed, evidence of a later history may be lost for good. Secondly, and most important for the student of material culture, our understanding of the category to which the object



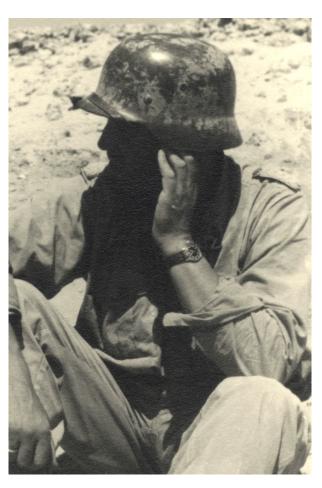
Figure 10.

The other ranks cap shown here looks authentic but it has been modified twice, by the replacement of its original eagle and application or replacement of the soutache, the addition of a sweatband (to make the the soutache application look more plausible?) and the application of several faux stamps, and by the reapplication of the replacement eagle and the replacement of the white soutache with the pink soutache and the removal of the sweatband. The purpose of these modifications was to create the appearance an unaltered original Afrikamütze related to a desirable formation, which was particularly charismatic and therefore particularly valuable. The result is a cap with no charisma at all. Photos: AKF (inset & bottom); Hermann Historica Auctioneers, Munich (top and middle)

belongs is muddied, through the introduction into the record of plausible errors, such as minor anachronisms and variant applications—the wrong eagle or cockade for the period, the wrong technique of application for the manufacturer. While for some objects, the record is sufficiently extensive to show these errors up, for others it is not. For example, till recently the only example of an officers' tropical side cap or *Schiffchen* in the public record had, for a cap of its date by its maker, incorrectly replaced insignia (Figueroa 1996, fig. 54), so that when it was copied by fakers, so too was its incorrectly applied insignia (WAF 2016)!⁴ Finally, by inserting an element of doubt between the object and its history, in this case about whether or not it saw service in the all important the desert campaign, it destroys the former's charisma.

Figure 11.

Helmet worn by Knight's Cross holder Georg Briel of the 90th Light Division. Briel's helmet is probably hand-painted (cf. the helmets in Figure 1 and on the cover, which are shinier and probably spray painted). Because of the greater variability in hand-painted camouflage, it is easier to fake convincingly. Photo: Mike Donne coll.



Unidentifiable fakes

The second group comprises fakes that cannot be distinguished from the real thing, because they copy this exactly, or because we do not know for sure what the real thing looked like.

Typical of the former is the desert camouflaged M35 or M40 steel helmet (**Fig 11 & cover**). These were standard issue helmets, hand or spray painted in theatre, with a variety of different "sand" colours, to which desert sand was sometimes added or applied (McGuirk 1987, 150, 173). I have spent hours studying such helmets, and although in many cases it is easy enough

⁴ The cap is by Robert Lubstein and dated 1941. It has a hand-sewn eagle and a hand-sewn cockade like some earlier Lubstein tropical peaked caps (Borg & Twiname 2010, 30; McGuirk 1987, pl. 46 left), but unlike most other earlier and all other 1941-dated tropical caps by this maker (e.g. Borg & Twiname 2010, 23, 31; McGuirk 1987, pls 28, 29, 46, right; Pritchett 2014, 282).

to distinguish the real from the fake (the former usually because they have an authentic-looking, difficult to simulate patina; the latter usually because the faker failed convincingly to achieve this, or because the sand-coloured paint overlies obvious traces of age), in others it is impossible to discern anything that would place it in one group or the other. Once again, therefore, the link between the object and the desert campaign is broken, and both the helmet's charisma and interpretative value destroyed.

Typical of the latter is the unofficial *Sonderverband* 288 metal badge (**Fig. 12**). These were made by local craftsmen, who, by the look of the badges, cast



Figure 12.

"Real" and "fake" Sonderverband 288 metal badges. The morphology of that on the left is comparable (though not identical) to a badge in the only know period photo that shows a Sonderverband 288 metal badge being worn (WAF 2013) and similar to that of badges believed to have been brought home from North Africa by allied veterans (WRF 2012). It is assumed to be authentic. The type to the right is assumed to be a fake, because of the absence of period analogues. In fact, owing to the absence of an official template for what were unofficial, locally made objects, there can be no proof whether such badges are real or not except for a veteran provenance. Photos: unknown (left); author (right)

them in sand moulds, and finished them off by hand. The result was an object that was never exactly the same, that is easy to copy, and, because it was not based on an official template, need not be the only possible authentic variant. The consequence of this is exactly the same as for helmets, we don't know whether some are real or fake, the link between the object and the desert campaign is broken, and its charisma and interpretative value destroyed.

Fantasy objects

The last group consists of obvious modern reproductions (Seager Thomas 2015, fig. 5), memorabilia, such as mugs and T-shirts (**Fig. 13**), and inventions (often described by collectors as "fantasy objects") (**Figs 14–15**), all of which have been tagged with an *Afrikakorps* label, but which for the

most part were neither intended to, nor could ever fool a student of Afrikakorps material culture. Why, one wonders, do these exist? The former are sometimes described as "for re-enactors", but the actual numbers of re-enactors, though these are widespread, is hardly sufficient to account for the very many objects on sale. And why buy a mug or a T-shirt depicting a general who died over 70 years ago or a "fictitious" object? The answer, once again, is charisma. Just as in the later 19th-century merchandizers cashed-in on the charisma of Napoleon, making a living out of making and selling Napoleon busts, death masks and door-stops, SO. merchandizers today cash-in on the charisma



Figure 13.

Modern mug showing a photo of Erwin
Rommel. Photo: etsy

of successful football teams, popular films, and other contemporary icons, amongst which—for the reasons outlined earlier—are Rommel and the *Afrikakorps*. Obviously these objects are not actually charismatic but for those who "get it" their appeal is similar. Naïve copies and fantasy objects are sometimes passed off on the unwary as authentic *Afrikakorps*, but the differences between them and authentic material is great, and their affect on the authentic material culture record minimal; their importance, rather, lies in the insight they provide into the potency of charisma, even at a considerable remove, in this field of material culture studies.



Figure 14.

Fantasy objects. Left: matchbox holder showing the Sonderverband 288 badge. When these first appeared, they were described as "acquired at the estate sale of a prominent collector". This spurious history has since been dropped. Their sudden appearance on the market, and the apparently official stamp on the reverse, gave their real nature away. Right: hilt of an authentic WW2 German bayonet etched post-war with an Afrikakorps palm. Dress bayonets were etched; field bayonets, like this one, were not. Photos: ebay (inset); the Saleroom (right); unknown (left)



Figure 15.

Fake cloth "Afrikakorps" document. Again no such thing existed. The 90th Light Division was never officially part of the Afrikakorps, while the palm is a copy of that which appears on a stamp printed in Tunisia for use by German forces stationed there in 1943, later than the document's purported date. Around the time the document came up for sale on ebay, so too did the original photograph used, obviously no longer needed. Photo: ebay

"FOUR LEGS GOOD, TWO LEGS BAD."

The property of "charisma" as attributed to the material culture of the Third Reich is of course dangerous. Nazism was, and for many continues to be, charismatic. But the charisma of Rommel and the Afrikakorps, and the charisma of Nazism per se are not the same, and hence the rehabilitation of one in popular culture and not the other. Nonetheless the swastika continues to inhibit (Fig. 16), contributing to the low academic status of 20th-century military antiquities, referred to in my introduction, and maintaining the focus of students of Afrikakorps material culture on the typo-historical,⁵ to the exclusion of fields of study, such as design aesthetics, symbolism, functionality, resource procurement, etc., which, if studied in relationship to most other categories of material culture, would be deemed self-evidently "respectable". In this way too charisma works against our wider knowledge of Afrikakorps material culture and our relationship to it.

⁵ This is my inference. The inhibition (e.g. BBC News 2005) and the failure of most publications on Afrikakorps material culture to consider such topics, despite clear hints of its wider interpretative potential (see notes 8 and 9), are matters of fact.

CONCLUSION

The relationship(s) of the foregoing are obviously complex. Central to a full understanding of them are: the history of the object, the imputation to it of charisma and a belief or lack of belief in this, the effect of charisma on the object's value, faking, the misconstruction, through ignorance, of the nature of charisma, the paradigms (anti-war, anti Nazi) consciously opposed to it, the destruction of charisma, and the distortion, contamination and destruction of the record. For different stakeholders, the importance of these varies. For the collector, most important are history and charisma; for the student of material culture, the integrity of the record; for the politically actuated, their particular political paradigm; for the faker profit. These of course are completely irreconcilable, their interaction and impact on the way we interact with the object leaving confusion in their wake, which the faker exploits. We have seen the results of this for the material culture of the *Afrikakorps*.

Figure 16.
Sonderverband 288 cloth patch for sale in Germany, where the display of the swastika remains illegal. Photo:
Militärische Antiquitäten Emig



Apart from the stated impact on the material culture record of the *Afrikakorps*, these observations are also important because it is not the only material culture record so affected, and they provide a model of what might usefully be addressed in dealing with these others. It also of course provides a starting point in our dealings with the problems surrounding *Afrikakorps* material culture itself. What this might be depends on our particular cultural paradigm.

The centre point of this essay has been "charisma". The implications of this for our understanding of the material culture of the *Afrikakorps* are clear and there is little more to say about it, but the property's relationship to, and implications for many other categories of material culture have yet to be recognized and explored. This then is perhaps the next step in the study of charisma. For the material culture of the *Afrikakorps*, charisma is only one, albeit a key aspect of its meaning. Other previous omissions, such as its meaning in the past and those paradigms that are consciously opposed to it, have been touched upon here, and these could be explored further. Others hardly touched upon include the aesthetic appeal of *Afrikakorps* uniforms, when compared to those of British and Commonwealth troops (German

uniforms are repeatedly acknowledged to have been more stylish than those of the allies),⁷ functionality⁸ and resource procurement.⁹ Just as we cannot fully understand *Afrikakorps* material culture without understanding charisma, and its affect on how we interact with the record, we may not be able fully to understand it without also understanding these things and *their* affect on how we interact with it. These then are perhaps the next steps in the study of *Afrikakorps* material culture.

⁶ One possibility is suggested by a 1987 collectors guide, which, quoting Juvenal, related the collection of Third Reich material culture to a noble desire to possess the arms of the vanquished (Lumsden 1987, 1). 70 years after the end of WW2 and in the wider context of military antiques collecting this view is no longer sustainable. But for earlier collectors, there might be something to it.

 $^{^{7}}$ In 1999, the British editor of the men's magazine GQ was fired for putting Erwin Rommel and, in a separate entry, "The Nazis" on a list of the 200 most stylish men of the 20th-century (The Guardian 1999; Lyall 1999).

⁸ In terms of its suitability for wear in the desert, Toppe *et al.* (1952, 8–9) considered the (stylish) WW2 German uniform inferior to its (less stylish) British counterpart.

⁹ Preliminary work by the present writer has identified differences and changes over time in the materials used by different makers of *afrikamützen* (Seager Thomas 2017, 36–37, 45, tabs 2–5), while McGuirk (2014) has argued that the manufacture of early tropical uniforms was focused around Berlin, and only spread later.

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Appendix 1. Books with the names *Afrikakorps* or *Afrika Korps* in the title on Amazon uk and bookfinder.com

Author	Date	Title	Languages	Туре
Alman, Karl	1968 1975	Knights of the Wehrmacht: Knight's Cross Holders of the Afrikakorps; Ritterkreuzträger des Afrikakorps	English, German	History
Balin, George	1985	Afrika Korps. Tanks Illustrated 17	English	Heavy equip- ment
Barber, Jack	1998	The War, the Whores and the Afrika Korps	English	Memoir
Barker, A.J.	1978	Afrika Korps	English	History
Barron, Leo	2017	Patton's First Victory: How General George Patton Turned the Tide in North Africa and Defeated the Afrika Korps at El Guettar	English	History
Battistelli, Pier Paolo	2006	Afrikakorps Soldier 1941-43	English	History
Battistelli, Pier Paolo	2006	Rommel's Afrika Korps: Tobruk to El Alamein; Rommels Afrika Korps: von Tobruk bis El Alamein	English, German	History
Baxter, Ian	2008	Images of War: Afrika- Korps	English	Photos
Bender, R & Law, R.	1973	Uniforms Organization and History of the Afrikakorps	English	Uniforms/ personal equipment
Bergot, Erwan	1975 1976	L'Afrikakorps: Les corps d'Elite; The Corps d'Elite: Afrika Korps	English, French	History
Blanco, Richard	1982	Rommel, the Desert Warrior: the Afrika Korps in World <i>War II</i>		History
Bradford, George	2008	Rommel's Afrika Korps: El Agheila to El Alamein	English	History
Hering, Burkhard	1957	Ärmelstreifen Afrikakorps	German	?Memoir
Canales Torres, Carlos	2012	La Palmera y la Esvástica: La Odisea del Afrika Korps	Spanish	History
Carell, Paul	1960 1961 2004	Foxes of the Desert: the Story of the Afrikakorps; L'Afrikakorps; Die Wüstenfüchse: mit Rommel in Afrika	English, French, German	History
Carruthers, Bob	2012	The Afrika Korps in Combat	English	History
Chamberlain, Peter & Ellis, Chris	1971	Afrika Korps: German Military Operations in the Western Desert, 1941-42	English	Uniforms/ Personal equipment

Author	Date	Title	Languages	Туре
Charles Rivers editor	2017	The Afrika Korps: the History of Nazi Germany's Expeditionary Force in North Africa during World War II	English	History
Charles Rivers editor	2017	Erwin Rommel and the Afrika Korps: the History of Nazi Germany's most Famous Commander and Army during World War II	English	History
Cockle, Tom	1995 1999	Armour of the Deutsches Afrikakorps	English	Heavy equip- ment
Cowles, V	1986	Den Gegner im Rücken. Nordafrika 1943. Sabotage am Deuschen Afrikakorps durch die SAS (Special Air Service)	German	History
Culver, Bruce	1979	Afrikakorps in Action. Weapons no. 4	English	History
DAK General Staff	2008	Afrikakorps 1941: the Official History Published by the General Command of the German Afrikakorps	English	History
De Lannoy, François	2008	Afrikakorps 1941–1943: La Campagne de Libye-Egypte The Libya-Egypt Campaign	English & French	History
Dittman-Bayerlein, Fritz & Spayd, P. A.	2004	The Private Afrikakorps Photograph Collection of Rommel's Chief-of-Staff Generalleutnant Fritz Bayerlein	English	Photos
Drabe, Wilhelm	2013	Mußestunden: Gedanken des Deutschen Landsers Wilhelm Drabe während des Feldzuges beim Afrikakorps im 2. Weltkrieg und seiner anschließenden Gefangenschaft	German	Memoir
Ellis, Chris	2001	21st Panzer Division Rommel's Afrika Korps Spearhead	English	History
Eschbach, Herbert	1958	Tobruk-Kilometer 31. Das Deutsche Afrikakorps im Kampf um Tobruk. Band 3. Soldatengeschichten aus aller Welt	German	Unknown
Fisher, D.	2011	Afrika Korps	English	Uniforms/ personal equipment
Fitère, Jean-Marie	1980	Panzers en Afrique: Rommel et l'Afrikakorps	French	History
Forty, George	1978	Afrika Korps at War, Vol. 1: the Road to Alexandria	English	History
Forty, George	1978	Afrika Korps at War, vol. 2: the Long Road Back	English	History

Author	Date	Title	Languages	Туре
Kurtz, Robert	2004	Afrikakorps: Army Luftwaffe Kriegsmarine Waffen-SS: Tropical Uniforms, Insignia & Equipment of the German Soldier in World War II	English	Uniforms/ personal equipment
Kurtz, Robert	2004	Personal Groupings, Award Documents and Ephemera of Rommel's Afrikakorps: Army - Luftwaffe - Krieg- smarine	English	Uniforms/ personal equipment
Law, Richard	1967	D.A.K. Deutsches Afrikakorps 1941-1943: German Army in Africa	English	Uniforms/ personal equipment
Lewin, George	1977 1979 2003	The Life and Death of the Afrika Korps	English	History
Lewin, George	1977	Rommel As Military Commander: Legendary Leader of Hitler's Afrika Korps	English	History
Lucas, James	1998	Rommel's Year of Victory: the Wartime Illustrations of the Afrika Korps by Kurt Caesar	English	Art
Luftwaffen Kriegs- berichter Kompanie	1943	Balkenkreuz über Wüstensand (Farbbilderwerk vom Deutschen Afrikakorps)	German	
Mabire, Jean	1993	Les paras de l'Afrikakorps	French	History
Macksey, Kenneth J.	1968 1970 1992	Afrika Korps; Das Afrikakorps; Afrikakorps: Rommel et ses hommes	English, French, German, Spanish	History
McGuirk, Dal	1992	Afrikakorps: Self Portrait	English	History, photos
Mitcham, Samuel	1982	Rommels Desert War: the Life and Death of the Afrika Korps	English	History
Mitcham, Samuel	1984	Triumphant Fox: Erwin Rommel and the Rise of the Afrika Korps	English	History
Möbius, Ingo	2012	Ein Grenadier Entscheidet eine Schlacht: die Erinnerungen von Günter Halm, dem Jüngsten Ritterkreuzträger des Afrikakorps	German	Memoir
Morales Loza, Néstor	1956	El Tesoro del Afrika Korps: Verídica Historia de Acción, Emoción y Dramatismo	Spanish	History
Nafziger, George F	1997	The Afrika Korps: an Organizational History 1941-1943	English	History

Author	Date	Title	Languages	Туре
Shales, Julien	2015	Infantry Artillery and Tank Combat in Libya and Egypt, volume 1: A detailed fighting account of 2nd Armoured Division, 9th Australian Division, 3rd Indian Motor Brigade, 7th Support Group and 22nd Guards Brigade in combat with the Afrikakorps and units from the Ariete, Brescia, Bologna, Pavia and Trento Divisions, February— May 1941	English	History
Silvester, Claus	1962	Journal d'un Soldat de l'Afrika-Korps	French	Memoir
Sonnenkalb, Horst	2014	Deutsche Panzer im Wüstensand. Erinnerungen an das Deutsche Afrika- Korps.	German	Memoir
Spayd, P.A.	2003	Bayerlein: from Afrikakorps to Panzer Lehr	English	Photographic history
Stahl, Peter	1972	Afrikakorps: an illustrated history	English	Photographic history
Thomas, Nigel	1992 2011	The German Army 1939- 45 (2) North Africa and the Balkans; El Afrikakorps Y Las Fuerzas Alemanas en los Balcanes	English, Spanish	Uniforms/ personal equipment
Tildem R. & Ralston W.	2017	Brigata Ramcke e Afrikakorps ad El Alamein	Italian	Photographic history
Time-Life	1990 1992	The Third Reich: Afrika- korps; Il Terzo Reich: Afrikakorps; El III Reich y Hitler: Afrikakorps	English, Italian, Spanish	History
Try, Rex	1999	Mussolini's Afrika Korps: The Italian Army in North Africa, 1940–1943	English	History
Vázquez García, Juan	2012	Afrika Korps: los Guerreros de Rommel	Spanish	History
Von Esebeck, Hanns Gert	1984	Das Deutsche Afrikakorps: Sieg und Niederlage	German	History
Von Esebeck, Hanns Gert	1949	Afrikanische Schicksalsjahre: das Deutsche Afrikakorps unter Rommel	German	History
Walentan, Paul Johann	2017	Mein Tagebuch 1941 & 1942: mit der Kolonne 651 im Deutschen Afrika Korps: Transkribiert und Herausgegeben von Hermann Seidl	German	Diary

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Author	Date	Title	Languages	Туре
Whiting, Charles	1986	Kasserine: the Battlefield Slaughter of American Troops by Rommel's Afrika Korps	English	History
Wiegert, Robert N.	1997	An Analysis of the Operational Leadership of Field Marshal Erwin Rommel in the Afrika Korps	English	History
Williamson, Gordon	1991	Afrikakorps 1941–1943 Fighting Elite	English	Uniforms
Wolfgang Wallenda	2014	Blutiges Afrika: Fremdenlegionäre im Deutschen Afrika Korps	German	Novel
Zulet, Ignacio	2017	Un Capitán Español en el Afrika Korps	Spanish	Novel

Appendix 2. Books on the WW2 North African Campaign with the names Eighth Army, 8th Army or Desert Rats in the title on Amazon uk and bookfinder.com

Author	Date	Title	Languages	Туре
"Q" Staff, G.H.Q. , M.E.F.	1943	Notes on the Maintenance of the Eighth Army and the Supporting Royal Air Force By Land, Sea and Air from El Alamein to Tunisia	English	Technichal
Adair, Robin	1974	British 8th Army: North Africa, 1940-43 (Key Uniform Guides 3)	English	Uniforms
Allen, Albert	1993	Desert Rats: 8th Army in World War II	English	History
Anon	1944	The Tiger Kills: the Story of British and Indian Troops with the 8th Army in North Africa	English	Contemporary History
Azab, Mohamed	2011	Poets of the 8th British Army: their Attitudes towards War from Alamein to Ortona	English	Poetry
Barnes, Barrie	2007	Operation Scipio: The 8th Army at the Battle of the Wadi-Akarit. 6th April 1943	English	History
Bernstein, B. L.	1943	The Tide Turned at Alamein: Impressions of the Desert War with the South African Division and the Eighth Army, June 1941–January 1943	English	Memoir
Blaxland, Gregory	1977	Plain Cook and the Great Showman: First and Eighth Armies in North Africa	English	Memoir
Burn, Andrew	2003	May the Fathers Tell the Children: Fighting with the Desert Rats 1942–46	English	memoir
Crawford, Robert John	1944	I was an Eighth Army Soldier	English	Memoir
Crimp, R.L.	1974	Diary of a Desert Rat	English	diary
Cyril Jolly		Take These Men: the Campaign of the Desert Rats from 1940 to 1943	English	History
Delaforce, Patrick	2009	Churchill's Desert Rats in North Africa and Italy	English	History
Doherty. Richard	1999	A Noble Crusade: the History of the Eighth Army, 1941–45	English	History
Fennell, Dr Jonathan	2014	Combat and Morale in the North African Campaign: The Eighth Army and the Path to El Alamein	English	History
Fogg, Roger	2010	The Desert Rats Scrapbook	English	
Forty, George	1975 2014	Desert Rats at War	English	History

Author	Date	Title	Languages	Туре
Frost, Donald	2009	From the Desert to Italy: Letters from an 8th Army Soldier	English	letters
Geer, Andrew	1943	Mercy in Hell: an American Ambulance Driver with the Eighth Army	English	Memoir
Griffin, H.J.	1997	An Eighth Army Odyssey	English	Memoir
Halberstadt, Hans	1993	Desert Rats: the British 4 and 7 Armoured Brigades, WWII to Today	English	History
Hall, Tony	1989	British Eighth Army Infantry "Desert Rat"	English	Uniforms
Harris, John	2016	Diary of a Desert Rat	English	Diary
Herbert, Roy	2006	8th Army Sapper	English	Memoir
Holden, Matthew	1973	Desert Rats	English	Unknown
Humble, Richard	1987	Crusader: Eighth Army's Forgotten Victory, November 1941–January 1942	English	History
Jones, Kevin	2001	A Pictorial History of the Western Desert Campaign	English	Pictorial History
Jucker, Adrian	2014	Memoirs of a Desert Rat	English	Memoir
Lucas, James	1982	War in the Desert: the Eighth Army at El Alamein	English	History
Macintyre, Liz (ed)	2008	Love Letters from a Desert Rat	English	Letters
McIntosh, Mac	1982	Bolo Boys: the Eighth Army — Before and After	English	Poetry
Merritt, Maurice	1981	Eighth Army Driver	English	Memoir
MIWO	1944	The Eighth Army September 1941 to January 1943	English	Photographic History
Montgomery, Bernard Law	1991	Montgomery and the Eighth Army: a Selection from the Diaries, Correspondence and Other Papers of Field Marshal the Viscount Montgomery of Alamein	English	Diary
Montgomery, Bernard Law	1973	Eighth Army: El Alamein to the River Sangro	English	History
Moreman, Tim	2007	Desert Rats: British 8th Army in North Africa 1941–43	English	History
Moreman, Tim	2011	Desert Rat 1940–43: British and Commonwealth Troops in North Africa	English	History
Neillands, Robin	2005	Eighth Army: the Triumphant Desert Army that Held the Axis at Bay from North Africa to the Alps, 1939–45	English	History
Parker, John	2004	Desert Rats From El Alamein to Basra: the Inside Story of a Military Legend	English	History

Author	Date	Title	Languages	Туре
Peyton, Mike	1985	An Average War: Eighth Army to Red Army	English	Memoir
Rainier, Peter W.	1944 2014	Pipeline to Battle: an Engineers Adventures with the British Eighth Army	English	Memoir
Sadler, John	2012	Desert Rats: the Desert War 1940–3 in the Words of those who Fought There	English	Contemporary History
Samwell, H.P.	2012	Fighting with the Desert Rats: An Infantry Officer's War with the Eighth Army	English	Memoir
Stewart, Adrian	1999 2002	The Eighth Army's Greatest Victories: Alam Halfa to Tunis, 1942-43; North African Victory: the 8th Army From Alam Halfa to Tunis, 1942-43	English	History
Stewart, Adrian	2002 2010	The Early Battles of the Eighth Army: Crusader to the Alamein Line	English	History
Syrett, David	2014	The Eyes of the Desert Rats: British Long-Range Reconnaissance Operations in the North African Desert 1940– 43	English	History
Talbot, Godfrey	1944	Speaking from the Desert: a Record of the Eighth Army in Africa	English	Reportage
Tuker, Francis	1963	Approach to Battle: a Commentary, Eighth Army, November 1941 to May 1943	English	History
Various	1944	Poems from the Desert by Members of the Eighth Army	English	Poetry
Verney, G.L.	1954 2002	The Desert Rats: a History of the 7th Armoured Division 1938 to 1945; The Desert Rats: the 7th Armoured Division in World War II; 7th Armoured Division: The 'Desert Rats'	English	History
Willett, Peter	2015	Armoured Horseman: with the Bays and Eighth Army in North Africa and Italy	English	Memoir